

CLAIMS:

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1. An air bearing slider comprising:
 a transducer for communicating with a disc; and
 means for supporting the transducer so that the transducer is at a closest
 position with respect to the disc during flight.

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2. A slider of claim 1 wherein the means for supporting the transducer
 comprises:

a composite slider body with a front portion composed of a first material
 and a rear portion composed of a second material, the slider body
 having an air bearing surface defined on a disc opposing face of the
 slider body, where the air bearing surface comprises the front
 portion and the rear portion; and
 a transducer basecoat portion attached to the rear portion of the slider body
 and containing the transducer.

3. The slider of claim 2, where an interface of the first material and the second
 material comprises a latitudinal plane substantially perpendicular to the air bearing
 surface.

4. The slider of claim 3 wherein a thickness of the first material is as much as
 about 15 times the thickness of the second material.

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5. The slider of claim 4 wherein a thickness of the first material is as little as
 about half the thickness of the second material.

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6. The slider of claim 3, wherein the transducer portion comprises the second material.

7. The slider of claim 6, where a lapping durability of the first material is greater than a lapping durability of the second material.

8. The slider of claim 6, where the first material is AlTiC and the second material is Al_2O_3 .

9. A method of manufacturing a slider which supports a transducer so that the transducer is at a closest position with respect to a disc during flight, the method comprising the steps of:
 attaching a layer comprising a second material to a wafer comprising a first material, thereby forming a composite wafer, the composite wafer comprising a plurality of sliders;
 forming on the layer of second material a transducer basecoat portion containing a plurality of transducers; and
 forming an air bearing surface on a slider, the air bearing surface comprising a leading portion of the first material and a trailing portion of the second material.

10. The method of claim 9, where a lapping durability of the first material is greater than a lapping durability of the second material.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising severing the composite wafer into a plurality of bars.

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12. The method of claim 11 further comprising severing a bar into a plurality of individual sliders.
13. The method of claim 9 wherein a thickness of the first material is as much as about 15 times the thickness of the second material.
14. The method of claim 9 wherein a thickness of the first material is as little as about half the thickness of the second material.